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TREE-TOP MORNING

ETHELWYN WETHERALD

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TREE-TOP MORNINGS

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By

ETHELWYN WETHERALD

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TO DOROTHY.

One bright morning a year ago, when I said Good-bye in a Run-along-now-as-I-am-very-busy tone of voice, you turned to me with tears exclaiming: "When you send me off to school without one happy word it makes my feelings feel bad!" And so My Dorothy—My Little Heart—I am inscribing all these happy words to you, in the hope that they will make your feelings feel good.

ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

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TREE-TOP MORNINGS

TREE-TOP MORNINGS.

How I like the tree-top mornings in the early early spring!
There's a steady sound of roaring,
Like a score of rivers pouring,
Or a hundred giants snoring,
Or a thousand birds up-soaring.
There's a rattle as of battle and a sort of splendid swing
Of the branches and the curtains and almost of everything.
Oh, I love the tree-top mornings in the early early spring!

Oh, what fun on tree-top mornings in the early early spring,
When the wind is loud as thunder,
And it snaps the boughs asunder,
And it lifts you up from under,
Just to run zig-zag and wonder
At the hurry and the scurry that such windy mornings bring,
At the flapping and the slapping of the clothes-line on the wing!
Oh, I love the tree-top mornings in the early, early spring!

THE WISE FROGS.

Early in the spring, with the wind on my cheek,
I went to the pond an old friend to seek.
"Old Friend Frog, what's the weather like?
Speak!"
Then a voice responded very low and weak:
"Still rather bleak, still rather bleak;
Bu-bu-bu-bl-eak, bu-bu-bu-bl-eak."

Later in the spring, with only just a few
Of my frog acquaintances, I said, "How do you
do?
Pleasant weather this, and a very pleasant view,
And isn't that a lovely-looking sky?" "Quite
true.
Very pretty blue, very pretty blue;
Bu-bu-bu-bl-ue, bu-bu-bu-bl-ue."

Warm grew the nights, and loud as a loom
Floated all the water voices up to my room.
"Tell me of the earth," I whispered through the
gloom.
"Is it full of flowers?" They answered with a
boom,
"Full, full of bloom, full, full of bloom,
Bu-bu-bu-bl-oom, bu-bu-bu-bl-oom."

SOMEBODY'S BIRTHDAY.

This is somebody's birthday,
Just as sure as fate;
Some little girl is five today,
Some little boy is eight;
Some little child is three today,
Some older one thirteen;
Some little twins are precisely two—
Two apiece I mean.

Someone is eating birthday cake,
And picking out the plums;
Someone is counting her birthday dolls
On all her fingers and thumbs;
Someone is bouncing his birthday ball,
Or winding her birthday watch;
Someone is not too wise or tall
For birthday butter scotch.

Think of the scores of birthday gifts,
Think of the birthday cheer,
Think of the birthday happiness,
Every day of the year;
Every day of the year, my dear,
Every day we're alive,
Some happy child is one or two
Or three or four or five.

THE ORPHAN DRAKE.

My orphan drake is two weeks old,
And a terrible bother is he.
Though cheerful and bright the truth must be told
That he's too fond of me.

When I go to the cellar he runs to the top
Of the stairs and loudly peeps,
When I go to the garret he'll never stop
Till he follows by jumps and leaps.

When I go for a walk he nearly kills
Himself keeping up with me;
So I have to carry him over the hills,
For he is so little, you see.

He clings so close when I'm reading that
I wish he would learn to swim;
And I fear some day the family cat
Will put a finish to him.

The moral is, "Never tag," for though
It makes the young heart ache
To suffer unwanted, 'Tis better so
Than to be a goose of a drake.

THE LAUGHING CROW.

There was once a crow who seemed to know
That precisely the very best time to go
For corn was when it began to grow.
And into this business he used to throw
Great zeal and his laugh would overflow
  Into haw, haw, haw, and caw, caw, caw!
  Which means ha, ha! and ho, ho, ho!

Said the farmer, "No, my ancient foe,
I can't kill you with an arrow and bow;
I'll trap you instead," which he did and so
The bird was brought to the house to show
To the boys and girls, who shouted "Oh,"
  With a haw, haw, haw, and a caw, caw, caw!
  And they chuckled, "Ha, ha! You are caught,
    ho, ho!"

Now this mischievous crow is as tame as though
He had never been wild six months ago.
He romps with the children in falling snow,
Or sits with them when the hearth is aglow.
He plays some tricks, for he isn't slow,
And they laugh together aloud or low,
  With a haw, haw, haw, and a caw, caw caw,
    caw!
  And a ha, ha, ha and a ho, ho, ho!

APPLE BLOSSOM TIME.

Spring time, sing time, let us make a ring rhyme,
Dancing down the orchard path in a bird-on-wing time.
May dews are pearlier, May branches burlier,
And the little school-bound feet early start and earlier,
So as to have a long time, and a sunny song time
Ere we reach the schoolhouse door, nine o'clock and gong time.
Longer will the morns be and full of jubilation,
When the harvest apples drop in the glad vacation.

May time, play time, don't we have a gay time
Underneath the orchard boughs at the close of daytime!
Busy lips chattering, pink blooms scattering,
On the lifted face and hands now we feel them spattering;
Then with hearts as feather-light, tripping off together, quite
Like a pair of birds, so happy are we in this weather bright.
Fairer will the days be and full of jubilation,
When the peaches color up in the glad vacation.

FOUR CLASSES OF CHILDREN.

The children born in winter-time
Are bright as the stars in a frosty clime.
Bright as the ice on a moon-lit lea,
Bright as the gleam of a Christmas tree.
And what you will notice about them all,
  Wherever you have found them,
Is that they're not only bright themselves—
  They brighten the lives around them.

The children born in the time of spring
Mirth and happiness with them bring.
Cheery as crickets, blithe as a rill,
Light as the breeze that is never still.
Gay as the robin's earliest song,
  Though chilly winds may flout them.
And then, they're not only glad themselves—
  They gladden the lives about them.

The summer children are good and sweet,
Sweet as berries and good as wheat,
Sweet as the breath of a clover place,
Sweet as a breeze to a sun-burned face.
With voices sweet as the sound of streams,
  How pleasant it is to hear them!
And then they're not only sweet themselves—
  They sweeten the lives that are near them.

The autumn children are clever indeed.
They love to study, to think and read.
They walk in the empty woodland vast,
And think of the future and think of the past.
I've noticed it over and over again,
  And mentioned it to their mothers,
The autumn children are thinkers themselves
  And *VERY* thoughtful of others.

THE SKIPPING ROPE GIRL.

There was once a child who used to skip
Seventy times without a slip,
Nip-etty trip at a regular clip,
In her shiny shoes with a laugh on her lip;
Over her head and shoulder and hip
Up went the rope and down it would dip,
And people would say, "She's as smart as a whip,
She'll be a good worker and that's a safe tip."

BUT
Ask her to weed the onion bed
Or bring an armful of wood from the shed,
Or set the table or cut the bread,
Or amuse her baby brother Fred,
Or do her work with a willing tread,
Then, oh then she would hang her head
And move as though she was nearly dead.

Now if *you* were this child that I used to know,
You, I am sure, would never act so,
But would make the work like a skipping rope go,
Never too fast and never too slow.
Nip-etty clip with heel and toe,
Hands that swift and skillful grow,
Laughing lip and a cheek aglow,
And work would vanish like April snow.

REAL CHICKENHEARTEDNESS.

A chicken aged less than a day
And as large as a dandelion puff,
Concluded that he had had enough
Of unhatched eggs and a nest of hay,
So scrambling out near a horse's heels,
He began at once to scratch for his meals.

The unhatched chicks neath their broken roofs,
Called out, "Beware of those awful hoofs."
But the elder brother replied, "My dears,
'Tis only eggs that are troubled by fears.
The chicken of genuine force and worth
Is afraid of nothing on the earth."

UNDER THE APPLE TREE.

A little, little girl and a big, big tree
Can have a lot of fun in blossom weather.
When the rosy branches bend,
She readily can send
For her very dearest friend,
And the two of them may spend,
With a numerous and interesting dolly family,
A leafy, branchy, blossomy,
Dilly dally, dolor free,
Pleasant, pretty, perfumy,
Pinky time together.

A little, little boy and a big, big tree
Can have some fun in harvest-apple-weather.
When the fruit is ripe and sweet,
He can go with Dick and Pete
To a comfortable seat,
Nicely shaded from the heat,
With some minutes for refreshments and for mirth and jollity,
And a hearty, happy, hammocky,
Breezy, blithe and banquety,
Joyous, juicy, junkety
Time they'll have together.

Some little, little folks and some big, big trees
Can have a lot of fun in windy weather.
When the leaves are on the ground,
All the little children round
Rake them up into a mound;
Then you hear a scratching sound,
And puff! the leaves are crackling and roaring cheerily.
And a noisy, boysy, rollicky,
Girly, whirly, fancy-free,
Flickering flaming, skylarky
Time they have together!

A MENTAL FAMILY TREE.

We were talking in the schoolyard about our family trees,
And Gertrude said hers could be traced to Sir Horatio Freeze;
And Rufe said he'd descended from the governor of a state;
And Louie mentioned ancestors of hers about as great,
While Reggie said his lineage embraced a lord, he knew;
And Nell from her great-great-grandsire obtained her blood so blue;
But neither of the little Smiths could say a single word;
For them to boast their ancient name of course would be absurd.

Then teacher, smiling slightly, said that she was much inclined
To think that there was such a thing as blue blood of the mind;
That those who studied hard (and here she beamed on Tommy Smith)
Had certainly descended from men of force and pith;
And those who loved to tend the sick and serve the weak and frail
Were morally related to Florence Nightingale.

(Here Jennie Smith blushed to the ears). And
when she saw a youth
(How bright she smiled at Johnny Smith!) who
always told the truth
At school, at home, or when he was at work or
having fun
She knew him for a relative of General Washing-
ton.

But Reggie doesn't like such talk; he says it
seems to throw
So much responsibilty upon yourself, you know.

GOING TO THE COUNTRY.

We are going to the country, come along my
happy child;
Through this breezy, easy summer you're to run
a trifle wild.
Bring your flaxen , waxen dollies and your dear-
est, queerest one,
And your little, brittle dishes, and your saucy
squirrel Bun.
Put your tiny, shiny slippers on your agile, fra-
gile feet,
Wash your rosy, posy fingers till they're very
clean and neat.
Stop to pop into the lightest and the brightest of
your frocks,
Tie your ramble-bramble hat upon your blowing
flowing locks.
Get the ticket at the wicket where the bags and
trunks are piled,
For we're going to the country,—Come along my
happy child.

TASTES DIFFER.

"If you would only be gentle and kind,"
Said our little kitty one day,
"And always speak low, and move rather slow,
How pleasantly then we should play!
For cat rhymes with mat,
And with afternoon chat,
And a little love-pat;
So don't forget that
If you would only be gentle and kind,
And smooth my fur just the right way,
And call me some pet name, you'd certainly find
How pleasantly then we should play."

"If you were only a livelier child,"
Said our puppy, Ravels,—called Rav,—
"And would hop, skip and jump
Over bush, snag and stump,
What a glorious time we should have!
For dog rimes with log,
And with loud-splashing frog,
Or a twenty-mile jog
Through a nice muddy bog;
So if you were only a livelier child,
And would call out, Here, Ravels; Come Rav!
And then dash off and prance through the wilderness wild,
What a glorious time we should have!"

THE WHITY PINKY PIG.

Arthur was a doctor
And travelled in a gig,
Edgar was a learned judge
And wore a gown and wig.
Fred was a comedian
And danced a funny jig,
And Ernest was a farmer,
With a whity pinky pig;
A whity pinky, sharp and slinky
Little blinky pig.

Edith was a mamma,
With a waxen baby big,
Lucy was a florist,
Who planted out a twig,
Nellie as a grocer sold
An apple and a fig;
And all would have been happy
Had it not been for the pig,
That pinky whity, small and mighty,
Queer and flighty pig.

He gobbled up the groceries,
He rooted up the twig,
The doctor's pony Rover
Ran at him and broke the gig;
He tangled up the learned judge
Until he dropped his wig,
And he stole the baby's cookies,
Did that whity pinky pig;
That whity pinky, quick as winky,
Swim-or-sinky pig.

A DEVOTED MOTHER.

If I had a little sick dolly,
I know what I should do;
I would tend it with care, and give it fresh air,
And go to the doctor's too.
And then if the doctor should hand me
Some candy pills from the shelf,
And dolly said, "Oh, I can't take them—no!"
I'd swallow them all myself.
For you know, of course, I could never use force,
So I'd swallow them all myself.

Yes, I am a careful young mother,
When dollies are sick and weak,
I forbid them to walk, I don't let them talk,
Nor even permit them to speak.
In winter I give them a straw ride,
Well wrapped up is each little elf,
And smiling to see with what vigor and glee
I am skipping and singing myself.
The unselfish and good and wise mother *should*
Do the skipping and singing herself.

THE NAUGHTY PARROT.

Once there was a little girl who spent the summer days
With sheep and cows and pigeons and horses out to graze,
And other gentle comrades. They all had pleasant ways,
Except a horrid parrot with a green and yellow head,
Who never made polite remarks, but always moaned instead,
"Oh, ah wah, ah, hoop bah, I don't *want* to go to bed!"

Now all these other animals were very very good.
They neighed or they brayed or they crowed or purred or mooed,
They barked or they bleated or they quacked or clucked or cooed.
But still that hateful parrot, he drooped his gaudy head,
And with a twinkle in his eye, he dolorously said,
"Oh, ah, wah, ah, hoop bah, I don't *want* to go to bed!"

THE RAIN-PIPE AND THE ROOF.

Pitter, patter, says the roof; pitter, patter pat!
The water through the rainpipe is slinking like a cat.
Hurry, scurry! calls the roof; the drops are coming thick;
And then we hear the pipe go, trick-a-lick-a-lick!
Rattle-battle! cries the roof, rattle-battle-rush!
Slusha-gusha! goes the pipe, slusha-flusha-gush!
Roaring, pouring! shouts the roof, and harder comes the roar;
Close up all the windows, and fasten tight the door.
Springing from the eave trough with a splashing sound,
See the merry water jumping to the ground!
Slower, lower, chimes the roof, rinka, tanka, tink!
Urgle, gurgle, says the pipe; tinka, linka, link!
Pitter, patter! says the roof; pitter, patter pat.
Tinka-link, the rain pipe, ticka, licka—spat!

ALL OUTDOORS.

When I went to the sea shore
I thought I'd better take
My picture blocks and painting box,
My wooden duck and drake,
My cardboard bird that whistles,
My train of cars, my Ted,
My Mother Goose, my china Moose,
My tin horn painted red.
But when I got to Grandpa's
He said, " These sandy shores
Won't let you play with anything
But All Outdoors."

My Teddy bear is in the trunk
My Indian hatchet quaint,
My Noah's Ark, the picture park
I just began to paint,
My ball and top, my marbles,
My rocking-horse and whip,
My auto-car that winds up
And goes biz-zook, gaz-zip,
Are still unpacked, for since I came
I find a hundred stores
Can't hold so many playthings
As All Outdoors.

BY SEA AND LAKE.

Twenty thousand horses
  Galloping abreast,
Hard hoofs hammering,
  Foam on the crest;
Thunderous, clamorous,
  Eager for the fray—
That is how the waves seemed
  By the sea today.

Twenty little babies
  Learning how to creep,
Soft voices whispering
  Nearly half asleep;
Murmuringly, lullingly,
  Lapped in slumber light—
That is how the waves sound
  By the lake tonight.

THE WARNING.

Once our little Benny went to steal a robin's nest,
It was a hot and darksome day with black clouds
in the west.
And just as he had climbed the tree and had the
nest down bent,
There came a sudden thunder storm, and here's
the way it went:
B-r-roar, gr-r-roar, bad lad, bang!
Cr-rack, is it back? Flash, whack, bang!
Grumble-rumble-bumble-dumble, put it back
before you tumble,
Cr-rack, put it back,
Flash, crash, bang!

Oh, my, how shaky felt his legs and oh how
queer his head,
He put the nest back in its place and off for
home he sped.
A rushing wind pursued him, the rain upon him
poured,
And in his startled ears the thunder ripped and
tore and roared:
Br-r-owl, g-r-rowl, bad lad, bang!
Cr-rack, is it back? Flash, whack bang!
Yes, you've had the best of luck, sir,
Or you surely had been struck, sir,
Hear me, Ben,
Never again!
Crash, flash, bang!

WHEN DIMPLEFEET WAS CUPID.

When Dimplefeet was Cupid
  His markmanship was fine;
His bow was made of willow branch,
  His arrows all of pine.
And first he sent an arrow straight
  At mamma's dress of blue.
"That means you're sweet," said Dimplefeet,
  "And somebody loves you."

And then he aimed at Grandma's shoes.
  Oh, mercy, how she jumped!
Her cheek it turned from pale to red,
  Her heart it thumped and thumped.
She caught the boy and kissed him well,
  Then as away he flew,
"That means you're sweet," said Dimplefeet,
  "And somebody loves you."

And then when Katie went to hang—
  Her towels on the hedge,
He crept up close and took good aim
  And hit her apron's edge.
"That means you're sweet," cried Dimplefeet,
  "If all the signs are true!"
"'Tis you that's swate," said Irish Kate,
  "And everyone loves you."

IN THE WATER.

Come ahead Jim, I'll show you how to swim,
Dive into a deep place and hold your head up so;
Push your arms out this way and kick back with a vim,
Keep your nose above the wave and then away you go,
While we all shout aloud, Oh, we're a jolly crowd,
As we're splashing, dashing, slashing in the water.

Don't be afraid, Bess will lend her aid,
I will hold your chest up and Marjorie your chin,
Walt and Ben will follow close as further out we wade,
And all of us will rush to you if you should tumble in;
You'd hear my orders then, To the rescue quick, my men,
And we'd bear you choking, soaking from the water.

Tom, Jack and May, I'll tell you what to play;
Play that you are porpoises and I will be a whale;
I'll move in stately splendor while you sport about my way,
And then I'll dash against you like a ship against a gale,
While you all raise a shout and spatter foam about,
As we're rushing, crushing, slushing in the water.

That's splendid, Jim, You'll soon learn to swim,
Isn't this by far the greatest fun you ever had?
Those fellows on the shore are coming with a roar
And kicking up the cold waves and spluttering like mad.
Hey, boys, hullo! We're singing as we go,
And laughing, chaffing, quaffing, in the water.

HELPING A LITTLE.

When the days are hot and growing hotter,
And earth is dry as a wornout blotter,
When the grass is crisp and the sky is copper,
And more than a burden is each grasshopper,
When the shrill cicada's red-hot voice is
A note at which no heart rejoices,
When at every crack the dust is sifting,
And gasping hens their wings are lifting,
I like to think of the deep snow drifting,
Of frost-bound pond and icicles brittle:
It helps a little.

When out on the path the step is ringing,
And keen as a whip the sleet is stinging,
When buffalo robes are heaped to the shoulder,
And the cold moon makes the night seem colder,
When a few thin leaves on the beeches shiver,
And dead and buried and gone is the river,
And out of the north the flakes are flying,
I like to think of the new hay lying,
Of summer airs in the branches sighing,
Of the hammock at noon where I lounge or whittle:
It helps a little.

SONG OF A SPOON.

There was once a bright little spoon
On a breakfast table in June,
Who sang this sad little tune:
"I've been thrown down with a dash and a frown
When I tried to get up to Redlip town,
And the words outflung by Mr. Tongue
Were the fretful kind that can't be sung."
And the thing that I tried to say
Was oh, what a dreadful way
That was to begin the day.

But the very next morn in June
I heard the bright little spoon
Sing this very different tune:
"From a silver cup, with a bite and a sup
To Redlip town I went gayly up;
And just at the chin I met a grin,
One came out as the other went in."
And the thing that I tried to say,
Was oh, what a splendid way
That was to begin the day.

THE CHEERFUL DUCKS

Down to the pond when the weather was warm
Hurried two ducks at signs of a storm.
Quack, quack, quack! Splash, splash, splash!
Fast come the big drops, faster the flash.
Down, down we dive at a big thunder clap.
Up, up we jump with a flap, flap, flap!
Waves on the breast and rain on the back,
Water, water, everywhere, quack, quack, quack!

Down to the pond when the weather was cold,
The same two ducks one afternoon strolled.
Quack, quack, quack! Why, isn't this nice?
A few drops of water at the edge of the ice.
Paddle, paddle feet, bubble, bubble bill,
Spatter, spatter, cheerily, flap with a will.
There goes a drop and a half on my back,
Isn't it glorious? Quack, quack, quack!

WHEN TEDDY WENT TO THE WOODS.

He nearly caught a chipmunk,
  He nearly stunned an owl,
He nearly saw a polar bear,
  He nearly heard it growl.
He nearly killed a rattlesnake,
  He nearly felt it squirm,
He nearly hooked the biggest fish
  With nearly half a worm.
He nearly walked a dozen miles,
  He very nearly hit
An eagle sitting in its nest,
  He nearly climbed to it.
Now if he nearly did so much
  When young, it seems to me,
What a wonderfully clever man
  He'll nearly grow to be.

PUSSY'S LESSON.

Kitty, kitty, kitty,
There's a squirrel on a limb;
If you know where
Don't you go there,
Don't you even glance at him.
Quick he leaps from pine to balsam and along the bridge so gay;
Now you should look quite indifferent, or glance off the other way.

Kitty, kitty, kitty,
There's a robin near the eaves,
If you know it,
Don't you show it,
Don't you touch the ivy leaves.
Loud he sings as though there weren't a cat in this harmonious world,
While you lap your cream or slumber in the pleasant sunshine curled.

Kitty, kitty, kitty,
Don't you know my duty stern
Is to train you
And restrain you,
So I hope you'll quickly learn
For a well-fed puss like you to murder things is wrong, and that
If you follow my instructions, I'll be proud of you, my cat.

A LITTLE CITY CHILD.

He brought a flower from the field—
  That little city child—
And when they asked him what it was,
  He said that it was wild.

And when they asked him of the bird
  That sang so sweet and low,
He said it was a robin,
  Or perhaps it was a crow.

And when the names of trees he met
  They begged of him to tell 'em,
He seemed to think that every tree
  Was simply called an "ellum."

The insects of the earth or air
  Which every day he sees,
He calls when wingless, "funny bugs,"
  The winged ones are "bees."

And if a garter snake should glide
  From out a bush or brake,
'Twould hear him shouting far and wide,
  "I've found a rattlsnake!"

DOLLS' SLUMBER SONG.

Hushaby, my babies, now the day is closing,
All the tired little birds are drowsing in the nest;
Out upon the lake the lilies are reposing,
And so must you, my little ones, upon your mamma's breast.
S-l-e-e-p, sleep, sink, sink to sleep—
Claribel and Muriel, Polly and Bo-peep.

Hushaby, my dearies, now the dew is falling,
Over on the meadow evening shadows creep.
On the edge of Slumberland hear your mamma calling,
"Come my little family, it's time to go to sleep."
S-l-e-e-p, sleep, sink, sink to sleep—
Claribel and Muriel, Polly and Bo-peep."

THE CICADA.

When the sun is hot and growing hotter,
And the pond is dry as the ink on a blotter,
When dust on the lilac leaves is showing,
And the grass is hay before the mowing,
Then up where the orchard leaves are brittle,
Comes the scrape of a violin sharp and little,
  Zeek, Zeek,
  Creak, creak,
Sweet is the heat of the midsummer's cheek.

When everything glares excepting the pine-trees,
And mercury stands tip-toe in the nineties,
When even the grasshoppers, tree-toads and crickets
Are gasping for breath in the meadows and thickets,
Then he tucks his fiddle beneath his green chin,
And screek, screek, goes the shrill violin.
  Zeek, zeek,
  Creak, creak,
Sweet is the heat of the weather I seek,

Dear little fiddler, oh, how I wonder
What you creep into or what you crawl under
When the cold rain comes. Small summer-lover,
Where is your refuge and what is your cover?
Play once again now the chill days begin,
Weak, weak, goes the shrill violin,
  Weak, weak,
  Meek, meek,
Music is weak as the days grow bleak.

LITTLE MILLIONAIRES.

Twenty little millionaires
  Playing in the sun:
Millionaires in mother-love,
  Millionaires in fun,
Millionaires in leisure hours,
  Millionaires in joys,
Millionaires in hopes and plans,
  Are these girls and boys.

Millionaires in health are they,
  And in dancing blood,
Millionaires in shells and stones,
  Sticks and moss and mud;
Millionaires in castles
  In the air, and worth
Quite a million times as much
  As castles on the earth.

Twenty little millionaires,
  Playing in the sun;
Oh, how happy they must be,
  Every single one!
Hardly any years have they,
  Hardly any cares;
But in every lovely thing
  Multimillionaires.

THE SNAPPING TURTLE.

A big snapping turtle came into our swale,
Like a dinner plate upside down,
With his four little feet and a cute head and tail
And a breast bone polished brown.

He snapped on the end of a stick I had
And you should have seen us go!
A turtle's a mighty lively lad,
Though some folks think he's slow.

He drew his four little feet inside,
And then was ready for the stunt;
Away on his big breast bone he'd slide
While I tugged along at the front.

I tied some sleigh bells to the stick
And merrily they did sound,
Jing-a-ling-ting as we went quick
Over the stubbly ground.

He couldn't tell me if he was hurt
As he'd have to let go to yell,
But I sometimes think the poor old turt
Didn't like it so awfully well.

A FUNNY CHILD.

There is a girl in our town and she is full of fun,
She prances and she dances with a laugh for everyone;
Her eyes are full of merriment, her voice is full of glee,
And oh, how happy, happy, you would think that child must be.

And so she is when things go right, but oh, when they go wrong,
You never get a smile from her, you never hear a song;
But how I wish when things are queer she'd bring us mirth and glee,
For oh, how happy, happy, then each one of us would be.

A RHYMING MOTHER.

One little sister and one little brother,
Happy all day and helping each other,
And oh, such a comfort they were to their mother.
And what do you think that nice mother said,
When she lighted the candle and took them to bed
And tenderly smoothed each fair little head?
She said with a smile that was well worth while,
I know now why pearl is a good rhyme for girl,
And I know now why joy is a good rhyme for boy."

PLAIN JANE.

When I first awaken, my mother calls me Bubbins,
When I try to dress myself she calls me Mother Bunch,
When I rock my dolly she whispers, "Little Woman!"
And I'm always Missy Messy when I spill milk at lunch.
When I shout and scamper she calls me "Happy Baby,"
When I get the ear ache or any other pain
Warm in my crib she tucks me and pets her precious ducksy,
But when I'm very naughty I am just plain Jane.

When I go to parties she calls me Popsy Pigeon,
When I start to Sunday School I am her little lamb.
But oh, I can't remember all the funny names she gives me,
I often sit and wonder what I really truly am.
Only just this morning I did what was forbidden,
I played out in the puddles and fell down in the rain,
And instead of saying Lovey or even little Dovey,
A voice called from the doorway,
"Come here this moment, Jane."

PLAYING TAME BEAR.

I like to play with Mamma best of anything I do,
She always laughs so easy and gets me laughing too.
Outside our games are Hide and Seek, I Spy, or Hound and Hare,
But when it's raining hard we play I'm her tame bear.
She ties a rope around me, I start to jump and prance,
She pulls me to the door step and says, "Dance, Bear, dance!"
And makes me walk on all fours or clamber on a chair,
And says, " Good fellow! whoa! come here, my nice tame bear!"

Then suddenly I tug my rope and act no longer mild,
And mamma says, "I greatly fear my tame bear's getting wild."
I pull her out into the hall and even up the stair,
She says, "What *shall* I do with him, my rough tame bear!
I hope he doesn't hug me, I hope he doesn't bite,
Just hear him growl and mutter, just watch him snarl and fight!"
And then all of a sudden she's in her rocking chair,
And gets a lot of squeezing from her wild tame bear.

LITTLE JOE AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

When a bluejay wants to talk
All it says is "squawk, squawk;"
When a cricket tries to speak
All it says is "screak, screak;"
When a crow lays down the law
All its says is "Caw, caw."
  And when you ask our Joey
  If this or that is so,
  He's almost sure to answer
  *Ho-I-oh-wo.
Bluejays, crickets, crows and boys
Which makes the funniest noise?
Squawk, screak, caw, ho?
  Ho-I-oh-wo.

Dogs bow-wow, or else berp werp,
Hens cluck and sparrows chirp,
Horses neigh, cows moo,
Owls go to whit, to whoo.
  But if examination's hard
  At school, I wonder why
  Joe says, when asked how he got on,
  †Ho-aw-wi!
Horses, cows, dogs and birds
All avoid the use of words.
Joe can too and not half try,
  Ho-aw-wi!

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*Usually pronounced Oh, I don't know.
†Preferably pronounced Oh, all right.

THE BABY WHO WAS THREE-FOURTHS GOOD.

"Now will you be good?" said little Bob Wood,
To his baby sister Sue,
As he lifted his hand with a look of command,
And the baby answered "Goo."

"You've sucked Noah's paint till he looks quite faint,
And wrecked nearly all his crew.
Is that being good?" asked stern Bobby Wood
And the baby gurgled out "Goo!"

"You mean pretty well, so seldom you yell,
And you never were known to look blue;
But you're not always good—that's quite understood—"
And the little one laughed and said "Goo!"

Goo is three-fourths of good," said wise Bobby Wood,
I suppose that's the best you can do;
But when you're as big as I am, you sprig,
You'll have to be good clear through.

THE LEAVES.

A great big house with such a lot of children,
Happy little children, swinging all the day,
Swinging and singing, and whispering together,
Dancing to the tune that the merry winds play;
Hiding the bird's nest, sheltering the squirrel,
Drooping o'er the dormouse, shadowing the mink,
Playing with the raindrops, sifting the sunbeams,
What a very busy time they're having, don't you think?

Said the great tree-mothers, "If you will be very,
Very very good the whole summer through,
All of you shall go to a big dance in autumn,
Dressed in the prettiest style you ever knew.
And after it is over and you begin to shiver,
And down, down-drooping is each sleepy head,
Won't it be funny to see you all go skipping
And hopping and flying and jumping into bed?"

THE LOST MAPLE.

On the border of the wood it beckoned where he stood—
That very young and tiny maple tree.
It was scarcely one year old and its leaves were red and gold,
And he said, "I think I'll take it home with me."
But while he went to play they softly blew away—
Those little red and yellow leaves—and then,
As it wasn't very big it looked just like a twig,
So he never found his maple tree again.

PROFESSOR GOODFELLOW.

Among the teachers in our land and those from foreign shores,
Stands forth Professor Goodfellow, who teaches out-of-doors.
His pupils roam the woods and fields and ramble down the lanes,
And never go inside at all excepting when it rains.
Now when Professor Goodfellow says, "John had twenty-three
Delicious peaches and ate five, how many then had he?"
The pupils are provided with peaches by the crate.
And readily subtract from those they had the ones they ate.
Or when he says, "Bound Texas," they board the Dixie train
And study their geography with all their might and main.
And when he says, "What is a noun?" Why, anything in sight
A boy or girl might single out would certainly be right.
The reading classes read all day the book of Nature fair,
The spelling classes find a spell in earth and sky and air.
But when Professor Goodfellow finds some forlorn abode,
An old deserted schoolhouse beside a lonely road,
And it should be a wet or cold or very stormy day,
He says, "Now children, school's dismissed, all run inside and play!"

TOMMY'S PREDICAMENT.

When Tommy learned the alphabet it took
months more or less
To teach him straight I, pointed A, round O and
crooked S.
We told him that the broken O was called the let-
ter C,
And that a table just in front turned it into a G,
That F had roof and door knob and E roof, knob
and floor,
H was a bench between two posts, Q had a path
before;
P had a bundle on his back, B had two bundles,
and
T was a gimlet, Y a tree, a branch on either
hand;
M was fat N and W was simply double V,
And anyone would know cross X, deep U and
zigzag Z;
R was K with a cover on, J was a 6 turned
round,
L had three corners, D with one straight line,
one curved was found.
But when poor Tommy with his hard won know-
ledge in his head
Went off to school he nearly swooned because
the teacher said,
"It cannot be your parents let you learn such
ancient lore,
We don't teach little children their letters any
more."

WHEN OUR CHEESE IS DONE.

I like a dinner pail that has some sort of a surprise,
A hunk of spicy fruit cake or two kinds of saucer pies;
Some candy or bananas, a pickled egg or two,
Or cookies pink with icing and thick with raisins too.
But oh, this everlasting bread and jam or bread and meat,
It makes me tired all over from my freckles to my feet.
So then I stop at Uncle's and lean on the gate real hard,
And wait and wait and wait and wait till he comes in the yard.
"Our cheese is done,"
I say to Uncle Ben,
"Ours is just begun,"
He says to me, and then
He cuts me off a big delicious chunk and off I run.

My uncle is a widower and buys the stuff he eats,
And my, he has a lot of dandy unexpected treats;
One time he called me in and gave me fish he'd learned to fry,
With mashed potatoes, cake chock full of nuts and lemon pie,
With oranges and lemonade and honey dripping sweet,
I tell you I felt splendid from my freckles to my feet;
But just one thing was missing and I wasn't quite at ease
Till Uncle said, "My goodness! Why I clean forgot the cheese."

"Our cheese is done,"
I say to Uncle Ben,
"Ours is just begun,"
He says to me and then
He cuts me off a yellow tender chunk and off I run.

WELCOME HOME.

When you hear, loud and clear, on a sleepy afternoon,
Such a noise as some boys very numerous might make,
Whoops and cries, large in size, and a lively whistled tune,
Scampering sounds, leaps and bounds, talk of pie and johnnycake;
Then the fleet dancing beat of a half a dozen feet,
Mixed with bumps, laughs and thumps, joyous shrieks and yelps, it's plain
You will say, sure as day, that the dog has gone to greet
In the hall just a small lively boy from school again.

THE FOLLOWERS.

Who'er has watched a plowman turning over
The grassy sod, must have been moved to laughter
To see from fences, poultry yard and clover,
Crows, cowbirds, chickens, running fluttering after.
Each diligently searches in the furrow,
The robins near the plow, wrens at a distance;
A chicken takes a beetle from a sparrow,
But not without its mother's kind assistance.

Serene the plowman treads, and all unknowing,
His only care—to judge him by his actions—
Is to make straight the way the plow is going:
He moves unconscious of his benefactions.
I think, were I a man, I would not yearn to
Adorn the platform, parlor, or piano;
For though applause is sweet, who would not turn to
The living earth that most becomes a man? Oh,
How good to plow the morning soil with Dobbin's
Ungrudging aid, and hear the children's laughter
As wrens and bluebirds, song sparrows and robins,
Crows, hens, and cowbirds, fluttered gayly after.

A BIG BEDTIME.

Once there was a mother with a hundred million
children,
And when she said, "It's time for bed, my dears,"
They all of them would sigh and answer "By
and by,"
And drive their parent to the verge of tears.
So then she told her troubles to a neighbor.
"O Mr. Wind, lend me your rod," she said;
"I really hate to whip," she owned with tremb-
ling lip,
"But otherwise they'd *never* go to bed."

"Dear Madam Nature, let *me* do the whipping,"
Said Mr. Wind, "it's fun; do let me, please."
When this the children heard, without a single
word,
They scurried off to bed as thick as bees.
The willing ones went off with just a love-pat,
The stubborn fellows fought and came to grief.
Then down came the sleet and a splendid snowy
sheet,
And covered up each little naughty leaf.

GOING A-NUTTING.

All on a windy morning what fun to go a-nutting,
To get the poles and beat the boughs until, like popping corn,
The nuts come dancing downward, the chestnut prickles shutting
Their hearts in velvet linings that must be bruised or torn;
And while the burrs are scattering,
To hear the squirrels chattering,
And beechnuts pittering, pattering,
All on a windy morn.

All on a windy morning to pick the odorous walnuts,
And beat the blackening butternuts on highest branches borne,
While both the babies fill their fists with acorns, which they call nuts,
Until there comes that startling, pleasing sound, the dinner horn.
And then they throw them scattering,
Like beechnuts pittering, pattering,
And homeward we go chattering,
All on a windy morn.

THE DRIVER.

The driver whistled as he awoke,
And he drove the dust like a cloud of smoke;
He drove the clouds like a flock of sheep,
He drove the leaves in a hurrying heap.
He whipped the hats from the passers-by,
And tossed them up till they seemed to fly.
He drove the rain into level lines,
And roared in the tops of the tallest pines.
He never paused in his greeting rough,
For it seemed he could not go fast enough.
But where he was going none could say,
And all you would hear if you went that way,
Was, "Oh, what a dreadfully windy day!"

OUR OLD FRIEND.

There's a pleasant looking fellow living miles and
miles away,
Yet he manages to come and see us nearly every
day.
He'll peep in at the keyhole or through the small-
est crack,
And say, "Good morning, children! Aren't you
glad to see me back?"
Then he glances through the door, and he laughs
along the floor
And chases to the cellar all the shadows big and
black.

No matter where he shows his face he is a wel-
come guest,
He always wears a golden coat and lovely yellow
vest.
His smile is broad and generous—bright as a
field of corn,
And he makes you feel so frolicsome and glad
that you were born.
Now when you have guessed his name, you will
praise him just the same,
And will give him smile for smile when he ap-
pears tomorrow morn.

WHEN FATHER IS IT.

When it rains all day or the weather is rough,
And dull in the house we sit,
There is fun to be had playing blind man's buff
When father is "It."
We tie a big handkerchief over his eyes.
He moves very quick for a man of his size,
And knows where we are by our laughter and cries,
When father is "It."

The little girls creep up and tickle his ear,
When father is "It."
He doesn't quite catch them, but comes pretty near,
When father is "It."
They pull at his coat tails, he gives a great start,
Then spins around twice and is off like a dart.
We dive 'neath his fingers with loud-beating heart,
When father is"It."

He whoops and he prances, he capers and bounds,
When father is "It."
We're a set of wild heathen, to judge by the sounds,
When father is "It."
Tom laughs till he has to lie down on the floor,
And Archie and Joe—you should just hear them roar,
For we feel that we simply can't stand any more
When father is "It."

THE BABY'S PHOTOGRAPH.

That's the baby's photograph,
Most as big as Grace herself.
See it up there on the shelf?
Dimpled face all one broad laugh.
Not a sniggle, nor a giggle,
Nor the least self-conscious wriggle,
But as if a laugh should start
From the center of the heart.
Ah, ha, ha! and Oh, ho, ho!
Shaking her from top to toe.
Well, when I feel mean as sin
I look up and catch that grin,
And of course I'm smiling too;
Can't look at it and feel blue.
Neither can her ma look sad,
When that little face, as glad
As the sunshine, cheers the room,
Driving off the air of gloom.
Even little Grace herself
Points up to the chimney shelf
When she cries, and wipes her eyes,
Says, "Dat's me," in some surprise.
Then with a reflected laugh
Greets her merry photograph.
'Twasn't much to get her taken,
But—well, I should feel forsaken
If we missed that bubbling laugh
On our baby's photograph.

A NARROW ESCAPE

A dear little bird flew in the woodshed,
Chilly and hungry and looking for bread.
And one moment later the door opened wide,
And I sauntered in with the cat at my side.
In a frenzy of fright the little thing flew,
When what did that terrible kitty cat do
But pounce on the bird. I pounced on the cat,
And then just as quickly as you could say scat,
Took the bird from the cat's mouth and let it go free;
It lit on a fence and remarked, "Twee-dee."

My little Twee-dee, you will have to look out.
You can't expect Me to be always about
When cats are around. Yes, I'll get you some bread,
But remember in future keep out of the shed.

THE FIVE PAIR OF TWINS.

Polly, Polly, Polly, tell the five pair of twins,—
The tiny scraps of small ones,
The thin and toppling tall ones,
The cunningly-devised ones,
The four just middling-sized ones,—
We're going to have a candy pull—
  Tonight the fun begins—
So Polly, Polly, Polly tell the five pair of twins

Polly, Polly, Polly, tell the five pair of twins
They may make some candy dollies,
Like the china one of Mollie's,
And some yellow candy kittens,
And a pair of candy mittens,
And a lot of candy fishes
  With the sweetest set of fins,
So Polly, Polly, Polly, tell the five pair of twins.

But Polly, Polly, Polly, if the five pair of twins
Go swimming in molasses,
Or to smearing Grandma's glasses,
Or to setting fire to paper,
Or—well any other caper,
They'll all be tied together
  Till they're sorry for their sins.
So Polly, Polly, Polly, warn the five pair of twins.

And Polly, Polly, Polly, when the five pair of twins
And the children of our neighbors
Have finished with their labors,

While without the sleet is pelting,
And within the candy's melting,
You must scrub those sticky infants
Till they're neat as jeweled pins.
Did you know your thumbs and fingers were the
five pair of twins?

THANKSGIVING.

There is something in thanksgiving
That is better than the best
Of the things upon the table or the
Most successful jest,
Or the smell of lemon, nutmeg,
Summer savory and cloves,
Or the sound of fires a-crackling
In the newly lighted stoves.
'Tis the soul of good companionship and hospitality
When Grandpa leads the people out and says so beamingly,
"All of you take cheers
Jest anywheers,
Set by and lay to!"

It isn't perfect grammar or cultivated charm
That puts that look in Grandma's eyes when she accepts his arm.
There's something sad and long-ago-ish, yet so sweet, so sweet!
The children and grand-children follow them with happy feet.
Then all of us are standing while Grandpa's saying grace,
And then he calls, "Come Polly, Bessie, Dick, up here's a place.
All of you take cheers jest anywheers,
Set by and lay to!"

NO, NO, NOVEMBER.

What ho, November!
Autumn crowns the glowing sphere,
Winter's grasp is full of cheer,
You between them sad and drear
Bind your brows with leafage sere,
Saying, "I remember
When the year was not a bier;"
Ah, woe, November!

If so. November,
Months like varying moods are sent;
May is rapture, June content,
Strength is with October blent,
But when pale Discouragement
Tends a dying ember,
Weakly bent and sorely spent,
Then lo, November!

Yet, O November!
Red and gold before you glow,
Dazzling near you shines the snow;
Grief like yours is brief, and so
Think not that with you I'll go
Sighing, "I remember!"
Weeping low and wailing; no,
No, no, November!

A COUNTRY GIRL'S GIFTS.

Among the country fields she strives,
  Apart from lavish living;
And yet with tireless skill contrives
  To know the bliss of giving.
The home-made gifts that from her hand
  Into a lengthening list pass,
Would make the dullest understand
  The joy she feels at Christmas.
A clover pillow and a fan
  Of peacock feathers tinted;
A woodland cane—a lame old man
  Of it somehow had hinted;
Some candy breathing sassafras,
  Or elderberry, maybe,
In bag of bark sewed up with grass,
  To cheer the neighbor's baby.
A poppy-box with crimson leaves
  Between its two glass covers;
A rosejar where dead summer weaves
  A spell to thrall her lovers;
A birchen book of ample size
  For valued thought or sonnet;
Along its margins butterflies
  And moths are pasted on it;
Ferns fastened singly and with care,
  A pictured face completing;
A maiden framed in maidenhair—
  Their delicacies meeting;
A paper cutter off the tree
  Wind-felled in January
But why go on? So easily
  Love makes her gifts to vary.
To give from out our wealth—or waste—
  Imparts some joy to living;
But only loving hearts can taste
  The luxury of giving.

OUR VALENTINES.

We sent a valentine one day
To our dear father far away.
It was a splendid big affair,
Of loves and doves and flowers fair,
Of cupids, roses, hearts and lace,
And on each rose you saw a face—
A photograph so cute and wee
Of Rob and Lou and Babe and me.
A big rose made the thing complete
With mother's picture smiling sweet,
And verses; "Dear, for thee we pine;
Say, wilt thou be our valentine?"
Soon came the answer, thick and wide,
And thrillingly we looked inside.
'Twas just a beauty, strewn with lots
And piles of blue for-get-me-nots.
And verses too: "Dear loves of mine,
I sure will be your valentine,
Your love is sweeter than the flowers
That perfume all the summer hours.
Each night before my eyelids close
I kiss with ardor every rose.
Goodbye! As long as sunbeams shine
I'll be your loving valentine."

IN FALLING SNOW.

The snowy flakes are falling
  On roof and water spout,
I hear the children calling,
  "O Ernest, Ed, come out!"
And then they go snow-balling
  With merry laugh and shout,
While Teddy tumbles sprawling,
  The funny little trout!
Now here is Richie hauling
  His brother young and stout,
While all the rest are mauling
  And pulling him about.
Oh, dear, what joyous squalling,
  What happy-hearted bawling,
It really sounds appalling,
  And yet I have no doubt
It's better far than crawling
  Around the fire with gout!

GRACIE'S VALENTINE.

Little Gracie wrote a letter, it was only just a line
And 'twas printed very neatly: "Won't you be my valentine?"
With a heart
And a dart
And a Cupid pink and smart,
And a shower of doves and roses, some together, some apart.
These were only colored pictures, cut from plates, you understand,
Smeared with mucilage and pounded with a moist and chubby hand.

Little Gracie in her letter printed neatly as before,
"To the very sweetest dolly in my Uncle Joseph's store:"
With an 'Oh!"
Uncle Joe,
Laughing loud and smiling low,
Pinned the note upon the sweetest dolly in a lovely row.
Pinned another note that said, "Yes, dear, I'll be your valentine."
Then he wrapped it up in paper and he tied it up in twine.

Little Gracie was at supper when the bell went ting a ling,
And she said, "Why there's the postman,
Oh, I wonder what he'll bring."
Through the hall
Pattered small

Eager feet and then a call,
"Papa, mamma, Florence, here's the dearest valentine of all;
It's that lovely, lovely dolly in a satin dress—Oh, Oh,
Isn't she as sweet—as sweet as—most as sweet as Uncle Joe!"

A LOVELY TIME.

When I was a girl in youth's fair clime
All my thought was "a lovely time."
A perfectly lovely time indeed
Was the length and the depth and the height of
my need.
I said, I will work and think and plan
To have just as good a time as I can;
And life shall be, when I come to my prime,
That grand, sweet song called "A Lovely Time."

Well now with my love for my brothers four,
My sisters and parents and neighbors a score,
My friends who number a hundred and three,
And my own adorable family,
My love for my baby, my love for my home,
My love for all lovers wherever they roam,
My busy life, like a silver chime,
Is a lovely tune to a lovely time.

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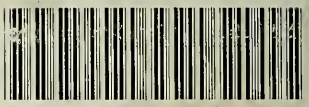
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